MEETING SUMMARY
SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SFWMD)
WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION (WRAC)
ISSUES WORKSHOP: BISCAYNE BAY COASTAL WETLANDS
BASIS OF DESIGN REPORT (Acceler8 Project)
Monday, February 6, 2006, 5:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Florida International University, Graham University Center, Room 243C
11200 SW 8th Street, Miami, Florida

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

John Adornato, National Parks and Conservation Association
Annette Fromm, Deering Estate, Miami-Dade County
Jamie Furgang, Audubon of Florida
Cynthia Guerra, Tropical Audubon
T. Joan Lawrence, U.S. Department of the Interior
Aaron Margolis, FIU
Ed Swakon, EAS Engineering, Inc.
Gerald Ward, P.E., Self
Gary Hahn, Self, Lexington, KY

SFWMD STAFF:

Rick Smith, WRAC Facilitator, SFWMD
Jorge Jaramillo, Project Manager, SFWMD/A8
Sean Williams, Project Engineer, SFWMD/A8
Renee Desantis, Outreach Specialist, SFWMD/A8
Charles C. Scott, Miami Service Center, SFWMD
Joseph Jean-Baptiste, Outreach Specialist, Miami Service Center, SFWMD

PROJECT CONSULTANTS:

Gary Nemeth, Project Manager, URS Corp.
Vic Kamath, URS Corp.
John Oseskie, URS Corp.
Raquel Shaw, URS Corp.
Gisele Colbert, E Sciences, Inc.
Deb Suma-Jaettson, URS Corp.
Chris Warn, Weston Solutions
Art Barnett, Weston Solutions

WELCOME, MEETING PURPOSE AND GROUND RULES:

Rick Smith, SFWMD WRAC Facilitator, welcomed the participants, explained the structure and function of the WRAC and WRAC Issues Workshops, the purpose of this meeting and a ground rules for WRAC meetings.

INTRODUCTION OF PROJECT TEAM AND PURPOSE OF BASIS OF DESIGN REPORT:
Jorge Jaramillo, SFWMD/A8 Project Manager, Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands and C-111 projects, introduced the project team and discussed the process for design of Acceler8 projects.

BISCAYNE BAY COASTAL WETLANDS BASIS OF DESIGN REPORT OVERVIEW: Gary Nemeth, Project Manager, CRS Corp., explained that the purpose of the meeting was to present and briefly explain the report and design for the northern portions of the project and get comments from workshop participants about the design report.

John Oseskie explained the conceptual design and project alternatives that were evaluated.

Questions and Answers:
Q (Adornato): Is the Yellow Book the "baseline" for the starting point on this project?
A: (Oseskie/Nemeth): Yes.

Q: (Adornato) Is the project as set forth in the BODR going to meet project objectives?
A: Presentation concludes that it does.

Q: (G. Ward) What is water source for Alternatives C1, C2 and C3?
A: C-1 Canal in vicinity of 97 and 87.

Comment: Need to post new slide on Alt 1A to the website and include in BODR

Q: (J. Furgang) Design of C-100 at Cutler: Had targeted 500 acres of wetland creation – is that in the design?
A: Value engineering, Section 19, BODR: Intent is to get water from C-1, reduce water from Deering Estate and make more water available for use to the south. Seepage is, however, an issue. Intent is to capture and redistribute stormwater discharges now going to tide at point sources.

Comment: (C. Guerra) Please align Spreader Canals as far west as possible. This might help control exotics invading further west.

Q: (Adornato) Re: New alternative - where is the justification for the conveyance line being further to the south?
A: Recommended changes based on availability of land. Maximum benefits are based on availability of water; however this new recommendation has not yet been adequately engineered. Land ownership and seepage will be issues.

Q: (Adornato) Biscayne Bay was dependent on and driven by groundwater discharges of fresh water. Why is seepage then an issue?
A: If lost to seepage, cannot use it for restoration and rehydrate the target areas. Can only go so far given existing water availability.

Comment: (Adornato) This is the first of several project components for Biscayne Bay. Don't engineer a plan that pipes water if concern is mostly lost to seepage. Let it seep as much as possible. Suggest comprehensive evaluation of all project components so that options for restoration, including acquisition of flowage easements are not precluded. To move water down the C-100, have to raise elevation, so the alternatives need to be comprehensive, including flowage easements.
A: Need to maintain existing flood protection and recognize property ownership.

Q: (Guerra) Some land is currently in public ownership. Need to incorporate and work that out.
A: The BODR considers all land in public ownership.

Q: (Adornato) Black Creek Wetland: Would utilities pump some water north? For the Lennar properties, would water be higher under Alternative C-1?
A: This needs to be coordinated with PIR Team and Miami-Dade WASD.

Q: (Adornato) Can't meet Meader's waterflow projections for area south to north without construction of flow way.
A: More land would not necessarily mean better hydrated wetlands. It is a question of amount and timing of water availability.

Q: What is the permeability?
A: About 3,700' per day.

Comment: (J. Furgang) This was supposed to be a treatment area
A: Because of changes in the area, cannot do what was envisioned five years ago. Water Quality in the C-1 meets Class 3 criteria. More information is available about seepage rates, geology, survey info., utility conflicts, environmental issues with the C & D Landfill, etc.

Comment: (J. Furgang) Concerned about water quality from the L-31E to the wetlands. Need treatment from west of L-31 to the east.
A: Wetland conversion a consideration.

Q: (Swacon) 400 cfs in the Lennar flow-way would not be enough when you need on the order of 1,000 cfs. Your assumption is very high discharges would be mitigated but it's not going to happen. And what is a "Coastal Glade"?
A: Can't economically get to more than 400 cfs with this portion of the project. A coastal glade is a transitional wetland system. Goal is to preserve spatial extent of the coastal glade wetland systems.

Q: (Swacon) Does the 400 cfs targeted to be sent south meet the Meader objectives? Meader's numbers are on the low side of what it will take.
A: Yes, it meets the objectives at the low end of his projections.
Comment: (Swacon) Can't find Meader's study on the evergladesnow.org website.

Q: (Guerra) Water in the L-31E is bad quality water. Don't want to put that in high quality wetlands. Need assurances you'll analyze that issue across alternatives, and that it will improve water quality.
A: Concern there is ammonia leachate from construction and demolition debris landfill. Data from Miami-Dade Solid Waste Authority indicates the proposed pumping scenarios won't cause the leachate to move into the C-1. There has been a leachate control system at the landfill operating for several years. Water quality date proves the leachate collection sytem works and water quality in the C-1 has improved.

Comment: (Guerra) Concern is not just leachate but degraded groundwater and surfacewater. We lost the battle on need for a Stormwater Treatment Area here and want to be sure water quality is not degraded.
A: There are two competing interests. Can't get the residency time to adequately treat, but we are showing no significant flux of bad water into this canal and the project will improve a stagnant water system. Leachate is going southeast of landfill. Quality of water from pump on 87th Avenue is going east. Don't have data on that structure.

Public Comment:
Gerald Ward:

1. This is a bad place for a meeting. Need to include people from Town of Cutler Ridge and they would have come out to Deering, Fairchild or So. Dade Gov't. Center.
2. Water availability north of 232d: Appears to have been converted to mitigation through the SFWMD regulatory process (Lennar permit).
3. Cost estimates: looks low. Need to include long term operation and maintenance costs and for vegetation management, especially east of 87th Avenue and the zone owned by the federal government. Need to include land management costs.
4. Weakest link: Public Access in sections 2-20; 1-4 and 16-7. Cannot find Section 19 on the website. Acquisition east of L-31.
5. Timing of the Deering and Cutler portions of the C-1 projects: The Cutler wetland project is tenuous.
6. Flood control: need to analyze S-19 and proposed use of the pump station to pump C-1. During Hurricane Katrina, roads were flooded in the area.
7. Lennar and other three parcels: don't throw options out.

8. Pulling water from C-1 using L-31 East: quality of C-1 water passing the wastewater treatment plan and the landfill – not good. C-1 water there is contaminated.
9. Understand SFWMD would get peer review or other opinions about Meader's numbers.
10. If you do the Deering and C-1 projects: Remember the system historically flowed to create rocky creeks where ships replenished freshwater supplies.

Ed Swacon:

1. Funding issue is you need to go back so far to get good benefits. What is the benchmark?
2. Deering and or C-1? Final designation could include action by Miami-Dade recreation Department.

Jamie Furgang:

1. Land Acquisition: SFWMD does not have eminent domain authority for this project, but there is such authority in Miami-Dade.

John Adornato:

1. Need better coordination of planning meeting places and dates for these Acceler8 and stakeholder meetings.
2. Need more funding for land acquisition for this project.
3. C-1 Canal: alternatives still indicate a high amount water going from point sources to Biscayne Bay

DEP and FWCC: support recommendations of the consultants.